



THE NATURE OF VOLUNTEERING

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EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF NATURE - VOLUNTEER

Fall 2006

DID YOU KNOW ...

that according to a study by scientists, about 12% of birds may face extinction by 2100 ?

At a rate 100 times higher than the natural rate, about 12 percent of existing bird species - about 1,250 - may face extinction by 2100, according to a study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

The study — by scientists at Stanford University, Duke University and the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis — said certain estimates show that since 1500, there have been about 500 extinctions out of more than 10,000 known bird species. But now, habitat loss due to development and global warming have brought a threat of extinction not seen in millions of years.

Many scientists, including Harvard University entomologist E.O. Wilson, believe that Earth is in the middle of a mass extinction comparable to the one 65 million years ago that wiped out two-thirds of land species, including the dinosaurs.

"That's about the magnitude of what we expect to see during the 21st century," Raven said.

A loss of bird species could seriously affect biological diversity and other ecological factors. Birds are essential to seed dispersal, plant pollination and insect control (Jane Kay, *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 4).



Wild Things

**AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
WILDLIFE**

**REFUGES ... where wildlife
comes naturally!**

A Strategic Downsizing Plan for the Northeast Region

by Deputy Project Leader, Brian Braudis

Military operations overseas, homeland security and hurricane relief have resulted in declining federal discretionary funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and other Department of the Interior agencies. This trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

In response to this national shift away from domestic spending, the Service must make tough choices to live within its financial limitations. Even if funding levels established by the President and Congress remain level, increases in permanent salaries, energy and other uncontrollable inflationary costs will continue to erode base funding for resource management and public use programs throughout the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Service must act decisively now to prevent the inability to effectively operate most national wildlife refuges in a matter of a few years.

To demonstrate, in three years at level funding, 74 percent of refuges in the Northeast Region would be operating "in the red" or at crisis levels: in five years, 89 percent; and in seven years, 93 percent.

To address this situation the Northeast Region developed a plan to strategically downsize and responsibly manage national wildlife refuges in the 13-state region. This plan establishes a paradigm for managing the 71 national wildlife refuges in the Northeast in a declining budget environment, assuming flat rather than decreasing budgets over the next several years.

The Strategic Downsizing Plan examines rental and lease space and co-locating offices as options for the future and downsizing workforce as an immediate approach toward efforts to address flat budgets.

Most refuge budgets reflect a 90 percent ratio for salaries and 10 percent for operations. With no action and flat budgets, in a few years refuges will have zero funding for operations. The



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CHIEF'S CORNER

National Wildlife Refuge
System Chief
Geoffrey L. Haskett

Taking Control For the Benefit of Wildlife

By the time this issue goes to press, Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dale Hall will have already testified before the House Resources Committee about the Refuge System efforts to address the difficult financial times in the years to come and still deliver conservation and wildlife-dependent recreation to the American people. Many regions have already begun to deal with the realities of shrinking management and purchasing capacity, which leads us to the assessment that we are now taking System-wide.

Our Refuge System work spans many scientific, environmental, regulatory and social arenas. To continue to manage effectively, 20-30 percent of a refuge's base budget must be devoted to non-salary costs - such day-to-day costs of doing business as fuel, utilities, monitoring wildlife, restoring habitat, and maintaining equipment and facilities for wildlife and people, just to name a few expenses that rise each year.

We also know there isn't enough staff to do all the good things we want to do, and our budgets will, at best, remain static.

All of the Service's regions are working together to look carefully at estimated position management costs for each region. Rather than spread staff thin across national wildlife refuges, we must move to focus positions in ways that best conserve wildlife and best provide quality wildlife-dependent recreation.

As we move through our analysis, we will be able to better see how one region's position management model can be adjusted and improved for all the regions to adapt and adopt. It will also help us determine how workforce planning can help us better structure our organization to best meet our mission.

Whatever the outcome of our efforts, we can assure Refuge Friends that their relationship with national wildlife refuges will remain strong and vital. So will our communications with them.

We will maintain our national wildlife refuges for the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and wildlife

habitat, in fulfillment of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act and our mission. We will continue to keep our employees, Friends and supporters informed. Ultimately, the Refuge System will be better served and the resources for which we are responsible will be better protected because we take control of our management, rather than passively wait for future budgets to dictate our path.

Nationally, Volunteers Chip in Almost 1.5 Million Hours

The number of Americans willing to lend a helping hand to the Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System keeps growing. Altogether, nearly 38,000 volunteers donated nearly 1.5 million hours to a variety of Service efforts during fiscal year 2005, according to the recently released "Friends and Volunteers Annual Report". Those hours add up to more than \$25 million in work on behalf of wildlife and wildlife conservation.

The number of volunteers has increased steadily over the years. In 1982, 4,251 volunteers donated 128,440 hours, valued at more than \$1.1 million. Ten years later, the number of volunteers had more than quadrupled to 18,103 people who donated work worth more than \$11.7 million. The largest number of volunteer hours, more than 584,000, were donated to wildlife and habitat work, with programs that deliver quality wildlife-dependent recreation and environmental education coming a close second.

Plan. continued from page 1

goal is to move the budget ratio to 75 percent for salary and 25 percent for operations and this will primarily be done by eliminating approximately 24 permanent positions and reassigning more than 20 other positions to other national wildlife refuges. These initial changes will achieve approximately 58 percent or \$ 1.4 million required to move toward the 75:25 percent ratio between personnel and operating costs.

Developing the downsizing plan involved many difficult choices. The National Wildlife Refuge System's regional senior leadership team and refuge managers worked together to determine the best way to make the necessary changes identified in the first phase of the plan.

Go ZeroSM

The Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge is partnering with The Conservation Fund and Pictorial Offset to plant trees in an effort to address climate change and leave a lasting land and water legacy.

Pictorial Offset Corporation of Carlstadt, NJ, the leader in addressing environmental issues affecting commercial printing for over 25 years, has taken steps to zero-out its carbon dioxide emissions by planting trees, offsetting the climate change impact of its office and manufacturing energy use for the entire year.

On October 25th, Pictorial Offset's staff, family and friends rolled up their sleeves to help plant the first grove of this new oak/pine forest at the Refuge. The planting continued by members of the community on Make a Difference Day, October 28th. - See page 5 for more on Make a Difference Day.

As trees grow, they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby providing an effective, partial solution to global warming. The Refuge will manage the lands to ensure that the trees will live 100 years to absorb approximately 6,319 tons of carbon dioxide.

The Conservation Fund, which has done major carbon sequestration (reforestation projects) in the Catahoula NWR and Red River NWR, is interested in doing more projects in New Jersey and the Northeast. Interested corporations provide the money to buy and plant the trees. For more information, click on <http://www.conservationfund.org/?article=3127&back=true>.

How does it work?

Native trees and forests help fight climate change as part of a natural process called photosynthesis. As they grow, trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere (CO₂ is one of the most potent greenhouse gasses) and convert it into oxygen. In addition to trapping the dangerous gasses that cause climate change, these new forests help to protect water quality, restore wildlife habitat and enhance public recreation areas.

The process of trapping carbon in forests, soils, geological formations and other carbon "sinks" is called carbon sequestration. Through its pioneering Carbon Sequestration program, The Conservation Fund has become the nation's leading environmental nonprofit working to implement on-the-ground solutions that address climate change. Since 2000, The Conservation Fund has acquired and protected 20,000 acres of unproductive land and planted more than 5 million trees, which will ultimately capture nearly 10 million tons of carbon dioxide.

Go ZeroSM

Climate change has become the biggest environmental issue of this century. But while most Americans agree that we must do something, the challenge seems too great, too

complicated for any one of us to make a difference — until now.

The Conservation Fund has launched a new program that makes it easy and affordable for individuals, corporations, or even entire communities to Go ZeroSM by measuring and then offsetting their carbon dioxide emissions - simply by planting trees.

Profiled in *Forbes*, *New York Times* and *Vanity Fair* magazine, Go Zero encourages everyone to become a 'Hero of Zero' today!

How is my carbon dioxide footprint calculated?

Your estimated annual carbon dioxide footprint is the sum of the carbon dioxide that is produced by your home energy use, auto transportation, and air travel. The total number of lbs is converted to tons. On average, each tree planted as part of the Fund's Carbon Zero program sequesters approximately 1.33 tons of CO₂ equivalent over a 70-year period.

Go to <http://www.conservationfund.org> and click on Calculate your Impact and Go Zero. Log onto the Fund's Carbon Zero Calculator to estimate and offset your emissions through a few simple calculations. The entire process takes about five minutes.



Pictorial Offset's staff, family and friends rolled up their sleeves to help plant the first grove of this new forest at the Refuge.

A WORD FROM OUR FRIENDS

The Friends of Forsythe NWR is a non-profit group established in 1998 to provide support and services to the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge in Oceanville, New Jersey. Our goals are:



- Promoting a better understanding of the natural history and environment of Southern New Jersey, the Edwin B. Forsythe NWR and the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Helping to preserve and enhance the wildlife habitat at this Refuge, and to assist the Refuge, the Refuge System and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a variety of educational and supportive efforts.

Please consider joining the Friends of Forsythe and help us accomplish these goals. Call 609-748-1535 or visit www.friendsofforsythe.org

Annual Friends Meeting Planned

The Annual meeting will be held on Nov. 15, 2006 at 7 PM in the Refuge Auditorium. Agenda will include Annual report, election of officers and at large board members and discussion of the road ahead. Please attend if you can as this will be an important step for the group.

Store is now open on weekends with many items suitable for Christmas gifts. Tree and garden ornaments, night lights and chimes with wildlife motifs, as well as a wide selection of stocking stuffers, books, etc. are available.

A successful series of bird walks this spring and fall will be continued next year. Additional leaders will help increase the number of walks scheduled. A beginning birdwatching class was held in spring and fall as well, with good attendance.

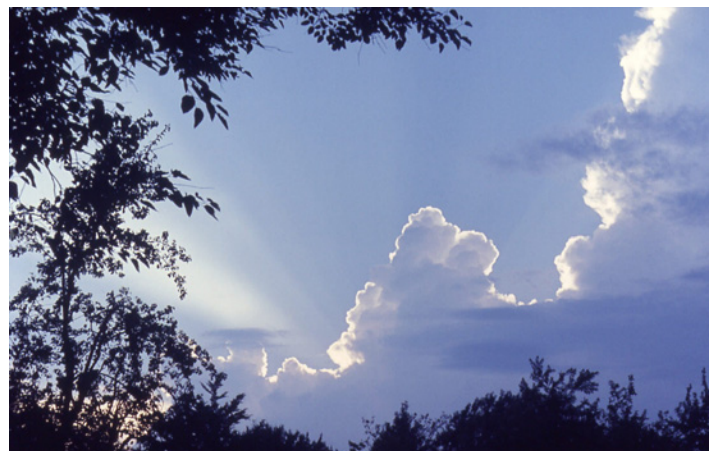
A new Visitor Center is now on the horizon. Proposal for funding in the 2008 budget (which the new Congress will be working on) will need strong support from the Friends. We'll provide further information and how you can help in the near future.

Ed Bristow
President, Friends of Forsythe



Stay Focused Photo Club is presently accepting new members. The club meets on the **SECOND SATURDAY** of every month, barring unforeseen circumstances. To find out about trips and events other than the monthly meetings, please visit their website at <http://www.stayfocusedphotoclub.com>.

Every month at the general meeting, the Contest committee gives members an "assignment". This could be an item, a thought, a color, a texture, a movement, just about anything. Unless the assignment is "OPEN", it is the photographer's job to think **what that word means** and capture it on film! During the monthly meeting, members hang their photos on the Brag Board and everyone attending the meeting that day takes a vote for what they feel is the best photo. That photo is be featured on their web site as "Photo of the Month".



Photograph of the month (September)
Assignment: Sky
"Clouds Backlit" By Dr Ed Bristow

Mariann Davis
Secretary, Stay Focused Photo Club

L.E. CORNER



The L.E. Corner will be back in the next edition of The Nature of Volunteering. It seems as if Officer Pancila has been a little busy - planning his wedding. Chris and his bride Linda were married on October 7th. Congratulations to the happy couple.

VOLUNTEERS

"For Volunteers Only" Field Trip

Summer came to an end before we knew it, but not before we took our annual "For Volunteers Only" field trip. This year the group stayed near home and visited Gardner's Basin and the Atlantic City Aquarium. The day began with a cruise along the backbays, followed by lunch at Gardner's Basin. After a brief rest, we were given a guided tour of the Atlantic City Aquarium and Gardner's Basin, where there was time for a stroll along the water or shopping for one-of-a-kind hand-made items. In spite of some of the hottest weather of the summer, it looks as if everyone enjoyed themselves.



October 28th marked the 18th annual Make a Difference Day, "America's largest day of doing good." It also marked the eighth year that Forsythe Refuge participated in Make a Difference Day activities.

This year, the Refuge partnered with Galloway Township's Clean Communities Program for a clean up of the Wildlife Drive and community tree planting.

A record 150 people signed up, but a forecast of heavy rain and high winds, kept many away, and others chose to make their difference the following Saturday.

Volunteer groups who participated were the Girl and Boy Scouts, Waterwatch and SAVE from the Richard Stockton College of NJ, Atlantic County Federation of Sportsmen's Club, Absegami High School National Honor Society and Refuge volunteers.

Primos Pizza in Galloway donated pizza and Shop Rite of Fischer's Bay. the drinks.

All the participants received Make a Difference Day t-shirts, thanks to Galloway Township's Community Education director, Barbara Fiedler.

Galloway Township maintains State recognition for their New Jersey Clean Communities grant-funded program that involves hundreds of volunteers each year in roadside cleanup efforts.

The cleanup, postponed from the 28th, was completed the following week.



Make A Difference Day is the most encompassing national day of helping others — a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors.



From My Perspective by Al Martens

VIEWS AND THOUGHTS OF A TRAIL WALKER

The Summer Season has come and gone.

The yellow billed cuckoos arrived at the end of April. They have been making themselves regular summer tenants at Forsythe. They are famous for the number of tent and gypsy caterpillars as well as the locusts that they consume. In the spring you see them on the Song-bird Trail uphill from the wildlife drive back behind the kestrel box where the great crested flycatcher has been nesting for the past couple of years.

Also in April, the Purple Martins claimed their houses. We had been worried about them. Last year they were in migration on the gulf coast exactly when Hurricane Katrina blew through; and while this year's numbers were down in other nearby areas, our colony here at Forsythe maintained their head count. They, along with the blue birds, had an excellent nesting season. The blue birds used the boxes located under the Martin houses for the first time. They raised two broods of chicks there. Blue birds also had good nesting out in the meadows near the kestrel boxes. Kestrels were around the number 2 box this spring, but moved on and starlings used the box that the kestrels had been sitting on. Perhaps the starlings chased them. If I had had a ladder with me, I would have evicted them. These are the same meadows that had the male meadow larks doing their jumping into the area, flashing their tails, field claiming displays while waiting for their harems to arrive.

The Baltimore and orchard orioles arrived soon after the tent caterpillars appeared in the scrub fruit trees along both sides of the road from the kestrel boxes over to the Experimental Pond viewing platform. From the platform is my favorite place to spot field birds including field and tree sparrow and bob white. This year my only bobolink was nearby.

If these meadows and scrub cherry tree areas are allowed to transition to or be planted over with oak or hardwoods, then the field birds that have started to thrive here will struggle with the loss of habitat. Hopefully we won't allow this. Habitat for these birds is rare enough and getting more rare. There is no way that deep wood birds can be attracted to this area with all the development that is happening along the refuge edges. The woods here can never be miles deep as required for deep woods wildlife. Perhaps we should protect what we have.

The Refuge continues to yield up surprises for me. While on a water bird survey, we spotted a life bird. It was after a strong weather front came through

overnight from across country, that we found a

Townsend's warbler by Jen's trail. This bird does not belong here. Did everyone notice the brilliant color of the Tupelo trees this year starting back in September? Join up with those of us who do these water bird

surveys. We welcome casuals. Even if you can't do the surveys on a regular basis you are welcome.

Early in September the yellow billed cuckoos became common sightings on the Saturday morning guided refuge walks. They fly swiftly, horizontally through the trees. I have yet to see one above the tree tops. They don't sit on the ends of branches or on tree tops as they prefer dense foliage. According to the literature, they nest maybe 6 to 20 feet above ground in poorly-built nests. When anyone finds a nest, please let us in on it. The young have horny, quill-like feathers that make them look like little porcupines. However, they are gone now until next year. We will search for their nests then.

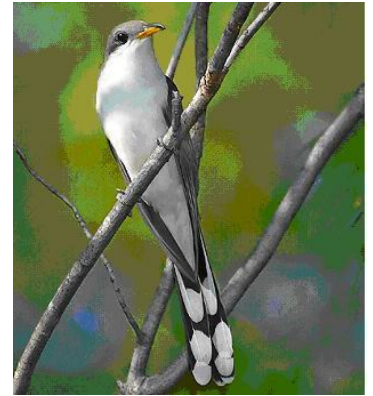


photo from Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences www.manomet.org

Forsythe Welcomes Seasonal Visitor Services Specialist, Lawson Reif



My name is Lawson Bush Reif, and I am a new employee here at Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. I am both honored and excited to be working in a new environment and in a new state. As a recent graduate of Emory University, I have spent the past two summers working in interpretation at Glacier National Park in Northwest Montana. New Jersey and Forsythe NWR possess quite a different landscape, but with the vast historical, biological, and natural resources present in this refuge, it leaves much to be interpreted. I look forward to my time here and am thankful for the opportunity.



Forsythe's Newest Staff Member, Kevin Holcomb



In August, Kevin Holcomb arrived as the newest wildlife biologist at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

He and his wife, Eileen, moved to Oceanville with their children, Myles, age 3, Andy (who attends Drexel University), and Chris (who attends Rowan University). Their oldest son Jesse is a high school biology teacher in Sussex County, NJ. Eileen is a special education teacher at Pleasantville High School,

Before coming to Forsythe, Kevin spent nine years at Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge in Sussex, New Jersey. As the first biologist there, he had the opportunity to develop and implement a comprehensive biological program. One of the highlights of his tenure was researching the seasonal activity and movement patterns of the federally threatened Bog Turtle (*Glyptemys [Clemmys] muhlenbergii*).

Kevin grew up in the Finger Lakes Region of New York. As a child he frequently toured the wildlife drive at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge with his parents. There his love of biology began. As a teenager and throughout college he volunteered at Montezuma, lending a hand to staff. His duties included staffing the visitor center, leading tours, conducting wildlife surveys, banding waterfowl, and observing bald eagle nesting behavior.

He graduated from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, where he majored in biology and environmental studies. After college, Kevin set his sights on a career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, working for several agencies to broaden his background and experience. His first position was with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation where he helped manage the Cayuga/Tompkins County Cooperative Hunting Area. Next, he worked for the New Jersey Division of Fish

and Wildlife, where his duties included observing neck-collared Canada Geese for the Atlantic Flyway Study; collecting data for a wood duck behavior study, conducting a Canada goose nesting study, and assisting in the Atlantic Flyway Breeding Waterfowl survey. After that, he worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal Damage Control in New York State addressing wildlife threats to public health and safety.

Kevin enjoys spending time with his family, hiking, photography, hunting, and visiting National Wildlife Refuges.

At Forsythe, Kevin is looking forward to working with the staff, volunteers, friends, and visitors.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Stay Focused Photo Club meets the second Saturday of each month at 10 am in the Refuge auditorium.

Saturday, November 4

Woodland Wonders 1-2 p.m. It is a beautiful time of year to join a ranger on an exploration of the forest on the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile Akers Woodland Trail followed by an optional car caravan around the Wildlife Drive.

Sunday, November 5

Salt Marsh Secrets 1-3 p.m. Experience the wonders of the salt marsh and see some of the creatures that call this area home on a ranger-guided tour of the salt marsh along the Wildlife Drive.

Saturday, November 11

Forsythe NWR, A Back Stage Pass 9-11:30 a.m. Are you interested in a behind the scenes look at the refuge's diverse habitat and wildlife? You will travel 2.5 miles through areas that are ordinarily off limits providing unparalleled access to the resource on this ranger-guided hike.

Sunday, November 12

Woodland Wonders 1-2 p.m. Join a ranger on an exploration of the forest on the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile Akers Woodland Trail followed by an optional car caravan around the Wildlife Drive.

Wednesday November 15

Friends of Forsythe Annual Meeting and Elections at 7 p.m. Meet in Refuge headquarters auditorium. Nomination forms have been mailed to all members.

Thursday, December 14

Potluck Holiday Party - 12:30 p.m. at Refuge Headquarters.



On November 17th staff and volunteers will be saying good bye to a very special friend and employee. Cindy Heffley will be leaving Forsythe and transferring to Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge.

Many of us first met Cindy when she started working at the Refuge as an AmeriCorps volunteer. When she completed her hours with AmeriCorps, Cindy applied for a position, and was hired by the Refuge. Since then, Cindy has proven herself an essential part of our team. Cindy has taken on many responsibilities in addition to Visitor Services Manager, including the fee program and many aspects of our hunt program, and Webmaster.

We can't really say good-bye because Eastern Neck is only three hours away. She and Sandy have already begun planning an overnight volunteer trip to her new Refuge.

We had asked Cindy to write a final article for the newsletter, but she found tears getting in her way.

So, all we can say is that we'll all miss her helpful ways and pleasant attitude. We know that Eastern Neck is getting a super-star.

WHO'S ON STAFF?

Project Leader
STEVE ATZERT

Deputy Project Leader
BRIAN BRAUDIS

Acting Refuge Manager
Barnegat Division
VINNY TURNER

Chief of Visitor Services
ART WEBSTER

Seasonal Visitor Services Specialist
LAWSON REIF

Biologists
VINNY TURNER and KEVIN HOLCOMB

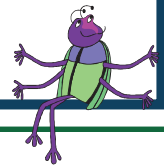
Refuge Law Enforcement Officer
CHRIS PANCILA

Administrative
Officer
MARTHA HAND

Visitor Services
Manager
CINDY HEFFLEY

Volunteer Coordinator
SANDY PERCHETTI

Maintenance Professional
TOM HOLDSWORTH



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